

## Fulmar Marine Conservation Zone

*This document sets out why this site is important, the features protected and general management information.*

**17 January 2016**



### Overview

This site became a Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ) on 17 January 2016. This means that specific features within this area are protected and, where necessary, regulators will manage marine activities.

### Where is the site

Fulmar MCZ is an offshore site, about 224 km of the coast of Northumberland. The site covers an area of 2,439 km<sup>2</sup>, and ranges from 50 to 100 metres in depth.

### Why it's important

MCZs, together with other types of marine protected areas, will form the UK contribution to an international network of protected sites in the north east Atlantic. The network will help to deliver the government's vision of clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse oceans and seas. MCZs protect typical, rare or declining habitats and species found in our seas.

The seabed of Fulmar MCZ is made up of subtidal mud and subtidal sand, with some patches of mixed sediments. This site provides important protection for undersea (subtidal) mixed sediments,

which is currently a gap in the protection the network provides. These mixed sediments are a mixture of stones, gravels, sands and muds. Because mixed seabeds are so varied, they can support a wide range of life. In the North Sea, venus clams can often be found in the sand and gravel. Other animals found here include worms, bivalves (with their paired, hinged shells), starfish and urchins, anemones, sea firs and sea mats.

The site also protects undersea mud. This is an important habitat for many animals, like worms, cockles, urchins and sea cucumbers. The sandy seabed also found in this site may, at first glance, appear desert like, but close inspection can reveal flat fish and sand eels camouflaged on the surface of the sand, and worms living within it.

Ocean quahog is also found within the site, often entirely buried in the sand with a small tube extending to the surface for breathing and feeding

Designation of this site as a Marine Conservation Zone protects the following features. You can find detailed explanations of each feature at <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-4527>.

| Protected features                        | General management approach      |
|---|----------------------------------|
| Subtidal mixed sediments                  | Maintain in favourable condition |
| Subtidal sand                             | Maintain in favourable condition |
| Subtidal mud                              | Maintain in favourable condition |
| Ocean quahog ( <i>Arctica islandica</i> ) | Maintain in favourable condition |

## Management of the site

Now that this site has been designated, some activities may need additional management. Activities and the management measures used to regulate them may need to change if new evidence becomes available.

Most marine activity is already regulated by the relevant regulatory bodies. There are existing byelaws, national laws and European Regulations which regulators use to manage fishing, coastal development, recreation and pollution. These also apply in MCZs.

Regulators will manage each site according to the features and activities in, or near, a specific area. Management measures will be implemented at sites most at risk of damage first, regulating only those activities which have a detrimental impact on the designated features. Any management measures that are required for MCZs will be applied on a case-by-case basis.

Management in MCZs can take several different forms, from using existing licensing framework, specific byelaws and orders or an EU Regulation for a site. There has to be public consultation on permanent byelaws and orders. For activities that already need a marine licence, regulators consider the MCZ in their decision as soon as the site is consulted on. Find out more about marine licensing in MCZs at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/marine-conservation-zones-mczs-and-marine-licensing>.

## Regulators

This table lists the authorities responsible for MCZs and the activities they manage.

| Lead regulator   | What it manages   |
|--|---|
| <b>Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities (IFCAs)</b><br><a href="http://www.association-ifca.org.uk">http://www.association-ifca.org.uk</a>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fisheries in the inshore area (0-6 nautical miles (nm)) including commercial fisheries and recreational sea angling</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Marine Management Organisation (MMO)</b><br><a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/marine-management-organisation">https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/marine-management-organisation</a>                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fisheries in the 6-12nm area</li> <li>Fisheries: enforcement of national and EU legislation</li> <li>Licensable activities such as dredging and disposal of dredged material, removal of gravel below mean high water springs, subsea cables (up to 12nm), construction (including renewables below 100MW generating capacity, ports and coastal protection)</li> <li>Harbour Orders and Harbour Empowerment Orders</li> <li>Section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989 and safety zones for offshore renewable energy installations consents</li> <li>Enforcement of licensable activity and other consents (including deemed marine licences)</li> <li>Development of marine plans</li> <li>Activities requiring a wildlife licence</li> </ul> |
| <b>Environment Agency (EA)</b><br><a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/environment-agency">https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/environment-agency</a>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fisheries for migratory and freshwater fish</li> <li>Coastal protection and flood management</li> <li>Water quality</li> <li>Permitted discharges from terrestrial sources</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC)</b><br><a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-of-energy-climate-change">https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-of-energy-climate-change</a> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Oil and gas related activities</li> <li>Renewable energy related activities</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Harbour Authorities and local planning authorities</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Harbour authorities have management responsibilities for the port and coastal waters within their jurisdiction</li> <li>Local authorities manage activities at the coast. These include coastal recreation, tourism, economic regeneration, flood protection and planning on coasts and estuaries.<br/>For further information contact your local authority or IFCA</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Department for Transport (DfT)</b><br><a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-transport">https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-transport</a>                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ports, shipping, harbours, ship pollution and offshore safety</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Natural England (NE)</b><br><a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/natural-england">https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/natural-england</a>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public access</li> </ul>   |



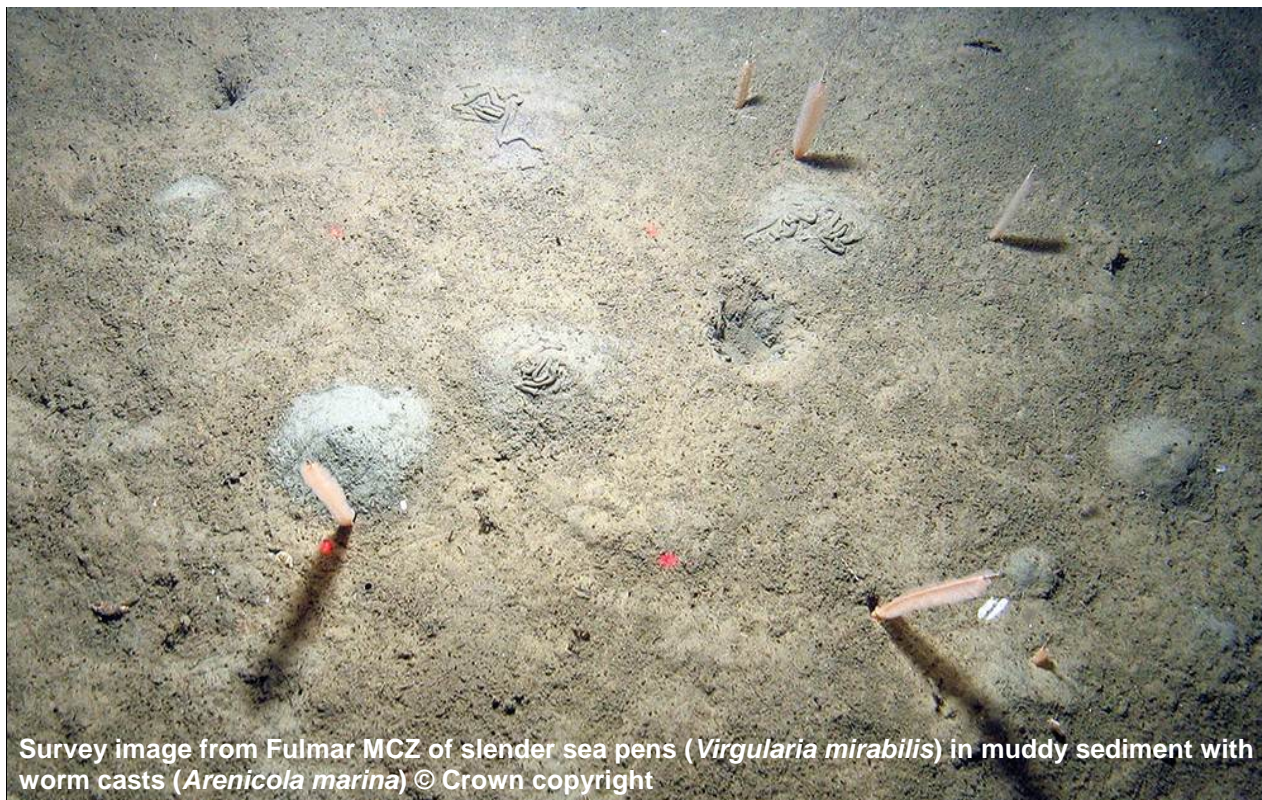
## Further information

Read about government policy on MCZs at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/marine-environment>

See JNCC's advice on MCZs at:

<http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-6658>



Survey image from Fulmar MCZ of slender sea pens (*Virgularia mirabilis*) in muddy sediment with worm casts (*Arenicola marina*) © Crown copyright



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